

NEWS SHEET

117

PO BOX 57 BALMAIN 2041

the balmain association

FOUNDED 1965

1.5 MILLION NRMA MEMBERS CAN'T BE WRONG -



OR CAN THEY?



Have you fought your way down to 142 Day Street, deep in the concrete jungle of DMR-land to see the second Harbour crossing schemes?

This latest act of urban terrorism which will destroy our area gladdens the heart of the private motorist lobby - the NRMA. On Caroline Jones' City Extra we heard Mr Huxtable of the NRMA tell us that a new crossing was needed because "it would do the greatest good for the greatest number".

The "greatest number", in his eyes, means the single-occupant private motorist. Good-old inefficient, energy guzzling, death and destruction American dream switch 'er on and get away technology.

Well, half an eye will tell you that the NRMA IS WRONG because the "greatest good for the greatest number" can only be made real by efficient mass-transportation systems.

But how will we ever know how this is to be done unless we have a transportation policy for the whole of the State?

By springing the new Harbour crossing schemes on the public in this way it is glaringly evident that the Government has again had recourse to adhocism in proposing this vast waste of public funds - money which it admits it does not have. How are these ad hoc decisions made? What are the ground rules for deciding when and where this unnecessary second crossing should be made? What factors determined the need to spend \$23 million on a ninth lane for the Bridge?

NEXT MEETING: MONDAY 1 MARCH 1982
7 30 PM WATCH HOUSE

Where is the transportation policy related to land use for the whole of the Sydney region being planned?

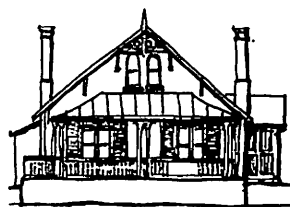
Every government since the 1950s has failed to come to grips with the use of the private motor-car in inner-city areas. The solution to motor-traffic problems is inseparable from a knowledge of land use. We all want to move about freely and quickly to work, to shop and to play. We all want comfortable homes and peaceful parks and we need industry and commerce to be concentrated in efficient patterns.

All these wants are incompatible but a compromise cannot be reached by flamboyant Harbour crossing gestures or by radial expressways converging to choke the inner-city. Without a Metropolitan-wide land use and transportation policy these political stop-gaps cannot solve traffic problems and will be economically disastrous if put into operation.

We call on the Government to abandon this ad hoc approach to transportation and to establish a body to control transport policy relative to land use on a full economic, social and environmental basis.

Furthermore, the Government must institute continuing public discussion to create a climate in which the public are aware of all the implications of any scheme on the environment.

The present ad hoc proposals have been foisted on the people of the Harbourside suburbs without any participation at all. Displaying the schemes at 142 Day Street, deep in DMR territory, is public participation replaced by official brutality.



16 TOWN HOUSES
ON
MAX COOPER'S LAND



Wood-Lee

A development has been made for the land towards the waterfront, on the cliff above the Canefields. A residents group has come together to object to the development along the lines set out elsewhere in this News Sheet.

The Association objects to the scheme particularly on the grounds of the environmental impact it would have on the adjoining National Trust listed house, Wood-Lee, at the front of Stack Street.

The new town houses are large bulky buildings which are only separated from Wood-Lee by Stack Street, an historic right-of-way, which has led to the house ever since it was built. The new architecture is much too brutal an exercise

Heritage Week 1982

(March 22-28)

Saturday 27 March is Heritage Day in Balmain. Bushwalkers are coming to Balmain to walk from Darling Street Wharf to the Watch House. The walkers will be accompanied by guides from the History Group who will describe the points of special interest on the way.

At the Watch House, Devonshire Tea and the Balmain Waterfront slide/tape show will be part of the event.

Note the date - you too are welcome. Members will be advised of further details in News Sheet 118

in design and, by conflicting with the elegant simplicity of Wood-Lee, only serves to degrade it and its surroundings.

The importance of Wood-Lee as a significant part of our architectural history is that:

- 1) it was designed by an eminent architect Edmund Thomas Blacket
- 2) it was built for a leading member of the Balmain community, Captain Thomas Rowntree in the 1870s
- 3) it has remained almost unchanged since its completion.

The impact of such a tightly-packed development as this on Wood-Lee would be considerable and must be a determining factor in rejecting the application.

THE BALMAIN ASSOCIATION IS FOR PEOPLE IN BALMAIN BIRCHGROVE ROZELLE



WRITING TO MR WHELAN?

Express your revulsion at the Government's intention to wipe out your area by writing to The Hon Paul Whelan, Minister for Consumer Affairs and Roads, 1 Oxford Street, Darlinghurst, 2010.

If you have already written to Premier Wran, never mind, just write another letter to Mr Whelan. When Mr Whelan replies write again - you have plenty to say SO SAY IT!

The Association's letter of objection follows:



15 December 1981

The Hon P Whelan
Minister for Consumer Affairs
and Minister for Roads
1 Oxford Street
DARLINGHURST 2010
Dear Mr Whelan,

I write on behalf of the people of Balmain, Birchgrove and Rozelle to express their revulsion at the publication of proposals for a second Harbour crossing.

We, in these areas, have for many years lived in the shadow of a great number of threats to our existence such as port expansion, multi-storey development and Harbour crossings. It is a matter of public record that erecting barriers across streets leading to the Mort Bay Container Facility prevented heavy trucks from disrupting weekends and weeknights. The later abandonment of the Facility expresses vividly the waste of public funds on that project. So does the time-scale involved - opened 1969, closed 1979.

Also a matter of public record is the pegging down of building height to a two-storey domestic scale. Our local government authorities now reject our to hand any building exceeding this limit. By this means the Leichhardt Council has managed to level out population and prevent increases in private car traffic.

Both the road closures and the town planning restriction mentioned were brought to fruit by the action of local residents. I use this to demonstrate the willingness of the people of our area to overcome what they see as attacks on their life-style.

How then do they perceive this current threat to their amenity and environment? The people demonstrated their rage against all proposed Harbour crossings by filling Balmain Town Hall to capacity on 2 December, twelve days before your schemes were put on display, and unanimously passed the following resolution:

THAT WE THE RESIDENTS OF BALMAIN, BIRCHGROVE AND ROZELLE, AND OTHER AFFECTED AREAS, CALL ON THE STATE GOVERNMENT TO REJECT IMMEDIATELY ALL CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS FOR A SECOND HARBOUR CROSSING TRAVERSING THE INNER CITY AREA. SUCH PROPOSALS, IF CARRIED OUT, WOULD RESULT IN THE DESTRUCTION OF THE HISTORICAL, SOCIAL, PHYSICAL AND ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT OF THE AREA.

I now state that the members of my Association fully support the outcome of that public meeting. Further, I am directed to say to you that there are only two realistic alternatives to this futile waste of public funds:

- 1) To do nothing, because linking the traffic congested in northern suburbs to the traffic bottlenecks on the south side, particularly Rozelle, will do nothing more than exacerbate the situation

- 2) If something must be done, then public funds must be expended for the good of the public - spend the money on public transport.

My Association readily perceives that no regard whatsoever has been given by your Department to the tearing apart of the social fabric of Balmain, Birchgrove and Rozelle and, of course, to that of the many other suburbs affected on both sides of the Harbour. The issues which desperately concern residents are as basic as "do we keep on living here, where will we send the kids to school if we have to move?" Lofty predictions that "only a few houses will be demolished" carry no weight with our socially-aware community. Countless numbers of houses will be seriously affected.

Moreover, it is ludicrous to expect that any government can compensate for things dear to human beings. How can you reimburse lost quality of life? The intangibles of happiness and fulfilment are above economic considerations - in fact, they are priceless.

It is also brutally heartless of the Government to impose a two-year hiatus on residents while your Department wrangles over cost-versus-efficiency in choosing the actual mode of crossing. Time cannot be halted and the people's daily lives will become nothing more than suspended animation.

Therefore, I call upon you to abandon all proposals for a second Harbour crossing immediately and begin a worthwhile study of transportation needs in relation to land use. Ad hoc decisions on mammoth constructions to alleviate the congestion caused by the private motorist and to palliate the NRMA lobby have little to do with providing transportation systems on a Metropolitan-wide basis.

The Wran Government has a good track record in improving public transport. My Association declares that upgrading the present creaking water-transport service by fast efficient ferries with full integration with other rail/bus/parking station facilities; that completing the Eastern Suburbs Railway to La Perouse; that implementing fast light rail systems; all these vitally necessary schemes are much more realistic than pie-in-the-sky private-car Harbour crossings.

There is another point to be made here on the subject of informing the people of Sydney on the serious and disastrous effect of your second crossing proposals. Your Department has seen fit to place them on show in an out-of-the-way, poorly lit, cramped room at 142 Day Street. I request that in all fairness to those who wish to see the magnitude of this destruction that you immediately relocate the display to a more centrally located and easily accessible building. The sight of elderly people anxiously looking for 142 Day Street in the expressway wasteland in that part of the city is a sight I wish never to see again.

The vacant floors of the Queen Victoria Building for example would be most suitable and is directly accessible to bus/rail connections.

Additionally, I must express my frustration at the Department's unwillingness to issue concerned groups such as my Association with same-size copies of the four diagrams showing crossing routes. The cost of these copies is miniscule in relation to the property value which they affect. I now apply for a full set of all diagrams prepared and will gladly pay the cost involved.

Finally let me reiterate the mood of the people in the area covered by the Balmain Association. Rage, disgust and full-blooded aggressive opposition are the feelings which I have been instructed to convey to you, the people's representative elected to be responsible for these construction matters.

Yours sincerely

Peter Reynolds PRESIDENT

Mr Whelan's reply was prompt but, of course, ducked the issue:

Dear Dr Reynolds, 31 Dec 81

I refer to your letter concerning the recently displayed proposals for a second crossing of Sydney Harbour.

Firstly, I would like to point out that these proposals are of a preliminary nature and have been prepared for the purpose of assisting public discussion of the desirability or otherwise of providing such a crossing and the form it might take.

There are, of course, many questions yet to be answered, or which require far more complete answers, and the views of the public and interested organisations will be vital. Accordingly, I have taken the liberty of referring your letter to the "Second Harbour Bridge Crossing Enquiry Team" which has been established to evaluate the proposals.

Your interest in writing and letting me know of the Society's views on this important issue is appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

(PAUL WHELAN)

Minister for Consumer Affairs
and Minister for Roads.

THE MARINA IS NOT ON
AND WHAT TO DO IF THERE IS
A NEW DEVELOPMENT NEAR YOU

We have received word that the marina planned for the bottom of The Avenue has been rejected by the Maritime Services Board (see News Sheet 113 and 114).

The Avenue residents held a victory party on the evening of 22 January in the park at the end of the street.

The residents' campaign is a good example of what to do when faced by a development of any sort affecting you. The Association is not against change but supports the rational idea that the people must be allowed to participate fully in any changes put forward by anyone - either in government or the private sector.

How do you go about objecting to a development? Follow the simple procedures set out below:

1. Leichhardt Council notifies you by letter that you may object within a certain time period
 2. Try and talk about the plans with the developer or his architect
 3. Go and see the plans at Council's Town Planning Department but make an appointment first if you want their advice
 4. Call a meeting of your neighbours and form a precinct committee
 5. Discuss the development - get it out into the open. Points to look for are: a) too much building on too little land; b) is there enough communal space within the development; c) how is the garbage to be collected - 16 town houses could generate 32 garbage tins all to be collected at 5 00 am; d) enough car parking to each town house, moored boat or whatever - remember that 16 town houses could generate 32 cars plus visitors; e) congestion in your street from visitor parking; f) traffic noise, car-door slamming and exhaust fumes on humid summer nights; g) headlight beams on your windows; h) treatment of existing boundary walls and fences; i) loss of privacy; j) loss of views - remember the High Court of Australia last year handed down a judgement ordering a resident's view to be returned by demolishing part of a development; k) loss of sunlight by building shadow; l) does the new architecture over-power the comfortably weathered and time-worn architecture of the existing buildings - the architectural character of our area is well known and nothing is to conflict with it; m) are any historic/National Trust buildings affected
 6. Each resident must write to Council, or any other authority concerned, and say just what you object to. Just use the bare facts - do not waffle and do not be emotional - it will not stand up in Court. Petitions look good but carry little weight in Court - just write in your own words as a resident affected by a development. Post your letter within the dates specified.
 7. Council will read your objections and make a decision either way.
 8. If Council rejects the development, the developer usually appeals to the Land and Environment Court - your objection could form part of the Council's case and that is why you must object within the time period allowed. That is also why petitions are of limited value - the judge will throw them out in Court. He will also not admit your objections as evidence if you have based them on emotion.
- You might not be able to prevent development taking place but you have the right as a member of the human race to have a say in how it is to be done. Do not sacrifice your quality of life for undesirable development.

Completely dissatisfied, we wrote again:

Dear Mr Whelan 2 February 1982

Thank you for your reply of 31 December 1981 to the Association's objection to the proposed second Harbour crossing. I note that you have taken the liberty of passing the matter on and that you make no attempt to answer any of the vital questions raised.

The public discussion that you mention is already underway and the desirability, or otherwise as you put it, of the proposals is well and truly under public scrutiny. We read in the Sydney Morning Herald (21 December 1981) that a crossing would cost \$800 million at today's prices. The interest bill on this sum of public money "would be about \$120 million a year" and we are informed that the new crossing and the existing bridges would charge a \$4 toll per journey just to meet that interest bill.

This represents a vast capital investment in the private motorist. Surely, by all simple accounting methods, it can be seen that the money must be spent for the most good for the most people. The "most people" can be conveyed by public transport. There is plenty of room for expansion of our public transport and the need for introducing new mass-transportation systems is screamingly evident.

The public purse must be opened for the people and they travel via public transport.

You are quoted in the above newspaper report as saying that your team would consider the "no need for a second crossing" option. Let us hope that sanity will prevail and that this, the only viable option, be the one adopted.

I remain, yours sincerely,

Felix Reynolds, PRESIDENT

Despite the emergency of the threat there is a noticeable and surprising complacency among those whose lives are most threatened. DO NOT BE LULLED INTO INACTIVITY.

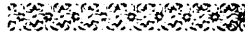
The Abbotsford bridge will go ahead. The Ryde bridge will be widened. These are relatively small RIVER crossings. Their completion will not prevent the vote-chasers from pushing ahead with a second HARBOUR crossing. WRITE NOW AND WRITE AGAIN!!!

COMBINED MEETING

2 FEBRUARY 1982

Gladys Chanter, Margaret Dobson, Frances Heathfield, Rod Linklater, Ethel May, Lorraine McDermott, Peter Reynolds, Trish Ryan and Gary met at the Watch House at 7 30 pm and processed the following business:

- 1 Apologies received from Andrea Nield and Richard Norman
 - 2 Letters from Ashfield Council re their Draft Planning Scheme
 - 3 From National Trust inviting articles for a new Australia-wide journal
 - 4 From Mrs Sue Balmain Griffin, Texas, re history of Balmain Family in United States
 - 5 From Mrs J Morris, Bilgoela Plateau re No 1 Wallace Street Balmain
 - 6 From Premier Wran in reply to our urgent telegram objecting to second crossing
 - 7 From Premier Wran in reply to our letter objecting against same
 - 8 From Min for Roads in reply to same
 - 9 From Sydney Morning Herald advising of inability to publish our letter objecting to second crossing
 - 10 Letter to Kaiser-Stuhl Wines thanking them for donation of wine to sell at our Village Fair
 - 11 To Min for Roads objecting again to second crossing
 - 12 To Leichhardt Council objecting to new development on Max Cooper's site.
 - 13 P Reynolds informed meeting of progress on new "Land-use Mosaic project" in Old Balmain area.
- Meeting closed at 9 30 pm



Visit the Watch House

The Watch House, 179 Darling Street, is open to the public each Sunday afternoon between 2 00 pm and 4 00 pm. Admission is free.

FAMILY HISTORY HUNTING

THE BALMAINS OF TEXAS

Did you know that there is a bevy of Balmain in Texas - no, not Texas on the Dumaesq River just this side of the Queensland border but the real Lone Star State.

We have had letters from Balmain in New York but now comes one from Canton, 60 miles east of Dallas, Texas.

Sue Balmain Griffin writes:

Recently my brother, Jack Balmain, was given a copy of your book "Balmain" (Half a Thousand Acres).

Jack lives in Houston. He brought the book to me to review. For the past 30 years I have been doing research on our Balmain family here in the United States and I have most all the information relating back to the same family of William and Alexander Balmain, from Scotland, arriving in the States in 1774.

I would appreciate your sending 2 copies of your book for myself. I am enclosing \$20. If there is more money needed to cover the cost please let me know.

I have been in contact with most all of the present generation of Balmain here in the States and they are all related. I have pictures back to Robert Pitt Washington Balmain, born 1812. I'm sure there are other photos in Virginia, since Alexander Balmain was quite prominent until his death in early 1800. He was the minister who performed the wedding ceremony for James and Dolly Madison. James Madison was one of our US Presidents.

I have not been able to travel to Virginia in person to do complete research but now that my husband has retired maybe we can drive there for a period of time.

Your assistance in helping me to receive a copy of your book will be appreciated.

Sincerely

Sue Balmain Griffin

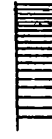
We are understandably delighted to receive Mrs Balmain Griffin's interesting letter and soon 2 copies of the book will be airborne to Texas.

WATCH THESE DATES



1982 MEETINGS DIARY *****

To simplify arrangements for Management Meetings, General Meetings and History Meetings one meeting combining all these functions will be held on the first Monday of each month - public holidays excluded.



Monday 1 March
Monday 5 April
Monday 3 May
Monday 7 June

Monday 5 July
Monday 2 August
Monday 6 September
Tuesday 5 October
Monday 1 November
Monday 6 December

Remember, first Monday in each month at the Watch House at 7 30 pm - ALL WELCOME.

The BALMAIN GARDEN CLUB meets every third Saturday in the month at the Watch House 179 Darling Street at 1 00 pm.

VILLAGE FAIR WINE RAFFLE

The lucky winner was Norma Hayman of Grafton Street. Congratulations, and thanks to all who participated.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome Julie Pocock and Peter Psaltis, Mr and Mrs J Baxter, G V and M R Patterson, A Long, North Sullivan and Jan Howlin and also Kerry McCarthy.

JOIN the balmain association

meaning BALMAIN BIRCHGROVE ROZELLE

OUR AIMS ARE TO:

- * improve the living working and recreational amenity of our area
- * maintain all features having natural architectural and/or historical value
- * compile and record the history of the area/ keep a permanent collection of items of historical interest
- * seek the co-operation of everyone concerned in the realization of the above

For further information please contact:

PETER REYNOLDS

827 3560



the balmain association

AMENDED SUBSCRIPTION RATES

MEMBERSHIP FORM

(OPEN/RENEW)

PO BOX 57 BALMAIN 2041

NAME:

ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE: (HOME) (WORK)

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION (including News Sheet delivery in Balmain Birchgrove Rozelle)

Single	\$ 4.00
Family or Household	\$ 6.00
Pensioner or Student	\$ 1.00
Organization	\$12.00

Add \$3.00 to above rates to have News Sheet posted. Cheques made payable to "The Balmain Association" 7.2.82 etc